

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 6097

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4

TAGS: PFOR, PO, SP

SUBJECT: SOARES AND SPANISH SOCIALISTS

1. DURING OUR SEPTEMBER 3 MEETING (SEPTELS), PRIME MINISTER SOARES SAID HE INTENDED TO TRY TO HELP UNIFY THE CONTENDING SOCIALIST FACTIONS IN SPAIN. TO THAT END HE PLANS TO INVITE VARIOUS SPANISH SOCIALIST LEADERS TO PORTUGAL FAIRLY SOON. HE HOPES THAT FELIPE GONZALEZ, TIerno GALVAN, ET AL, MAY BENEFIT BY A SERIES OF EXCHANGES OF VIEWS WITH THEIR PORTUGUESE SOCIALIST COLLEAGUES. IN MAKING THIS PROPOSAL, SOARES IS CONSCIOUS OF THE VITAL ROLE PLAYED BY A UNIFIED PORTUGUESE SOCIALIST PARTY IN DEFEATING PORTUGUESE COMMUNISTS. RECOGNIZING THAT NO TWO SITUATIONS ARE EXACTLY SIMILAR, HE NONETHELESS BELIEVES THAT CONTINUED FRAGMENTATION OF THE SPANISH SOCIALISTS IS LIKELY TO PLAY INTO SPANISH COMMUNIST HANDS OVER THE LONG TERM.

2. OTHER PORTUGUESE SOCIALIST LEADERS HAVE ALSO INDICATED TO US THAT THE PARTY CONTINUES TO MONITOR DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN SPANISH SOCIALISM. PORTUGUESE SOCIALISTS GENERALLY VIEW PSOE LEADER FELIPE GONZALEZ
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AS RATHER INEXPERIENCED FOR THE HISTORICAL ROLE WHICH

HAS BEEN CAST UPON HIM. PORTUGUESE SOCIALISTS
ASCRIBE CURRENT PSOE PROMINENCE MORE TO ITS WORKING
CLASS BASE THAN TO GONZALEZ'S INHERENT LEADERSHIP
QUALITIES. PORTUGUESE SOCIALISTS TEND TO BELIEVE THAT
SPANISH SOCIALISTS GROUPED AROUND TIerno GALVAN WILL
BECOME MORE PROMINENT AS PARTIES COME OUT INTO THE OPEN.

3. COMMENT: SOARES MADE CLEAR THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO
CONSULT WITH US. I IMAGINE HE AND THE SPD ARE ALREADY
MAINTAINING A DIALOGUE ON SPAIN. WOULD APPRECIATE
COMMENT THAT ADDRESSEES MAY WISH TO MAKE. SOARES
WANTS TO BE HELPFUL AND WOULD PROBABLY BE AMENABLE TO
A FAIRLY FRANK EXCHANGE.
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